

# Border Eagle

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Laughlin Air Force Base, Texas

July 29, 2005

## Alert Team XL maintainers avert potential ejection-seat disaster

By Airman 1st Class  
Olufemi Owolabi  
Public Affairs

During a visual inspection and operational check of a T-6 aircraft July 7, a 47th Maintenance Directorate egress and survival branch technician discovered there was difficulty operating the manual override handle (MOR) of the ejection seat which could have endangered a pilot's safety had he pulled the ejection handle.

As George Robinson, a workleader at the egress facility, was going through the inspection checklist, he noticed the MOR was hard to operate and notified his supervisor. "During the inspection which we are required to perform every 24 months, Mr. Robinson found the handle was functioning abnormally," said Zane Deneen, egress and survival branch supervisor. "I looked at it and found the handle hadn't been manufactured properly."

At first, these maintainers weren't sure what caused the handle malfunction; but during their investigation,

See 'Ejection seat,' page 4



Photo by Airman 1st Class Olufemi A. Owolabi

George Robinson of the 47th Maintenance Directorate points out the origin of a malfunction in a T-6 ejection-seat that could have caused serious injury had it gone unnoticed. Laughlin maintenance personnel found the discrepancy in a T-6A Texan II aircraft and initiated a check of all others to ensure the problem did not cause injury or impact Laughlin's mission. No other seat inspected had this malfunction, and no injuries occurred prior to this discovery.

## Laughlin spouses take flight with 86th FTS

By 1st Lt. Sheila N. Johnston  
Public Affairs

Thirty-six Laughlin spouses took flight Wednesday in T-1A Jayhawks as part of a spouse flight and orientation program hosted by the 86th Flying Training Squadron here.

Those taking advantage of the opportunity saw how their spouse works and what their "office" looks like, even if it is above the clouds some days.

"(It's important to have this program) because the experience helps (participants) understand what their

spouses do on a daily basis," said 1st Lt. Peter McClellan, the program coordinator and an 86th FTS instructor pilot, "They get to take a flight in the same jet their spouses are qualified in and fly every day."

Regardless of their experience with the Air Force, the spouses who flew in the program including those of commanders, instructor pilots and student pilots, all enjoyed the program.

"Flying in the T-1s was an opportunity to see what our husbands do on a day-to-day basis," said Mireya Wetter, spouse of Capt. Mat-

thew Wetter, 86th FTS instructor pilot. "I got a glimpse of what my husband used to do when he was in pilot training." Not to mention, she said, "It was a fun ride."

Lieutenant McClellan said this opportunity presents itself about every other year. The last time it was offered here was in 2003 he said. Unfortunately, due to pregnancy or head colds, not all eligible spouses were able to participate.

"Only a few (spouses) passed up the opportunity," he said. "(How-

See 'Spouse flights,' page 4

### Newslines

#### Assumption of command

The 84th Flying Training Squadron will hold an assumption-of-command ceremony today at 9 a.m. on the flight line.

For more information, call Capt. Tracie Pratt at 298-5726.

#### Col. Timothy Sowin's farewell

A farewell lunch is scheduled from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at Club XL Aug. 5.

For details, call 298-6464.

#### Senior NCO Induction set

A Senior Noncommissioned Officer Induction Ceremony is scheduled for Aug. 17 at 7 p.m. at Club XL. Social hour begins at 6 p.m. Uniform is mess dress or semiformal for military members and business or evening attire for civilians. Cost is \$21.95 with a \$2 discount for club members. The deadline to sign up is Aug. 8. Anyone wishing to attend the ceremony should R.S.V.P. to their squadron representatives. For more information, call 298-5262.

#### Deployment stats

Deployed:	62
Returning in 30 days:	1
Deploying in 30 days:	7

#### Mission status

Mission capable rate  
(As of Tuesday)

T-1, 85.7%	T-6, 87.1%
T-38C, 80.2%	

### Alcohol-related incidents

January to July 2004 8

Jan. 1 to July 20, 2005 16

Days since last incident 10

## As we make changes, some things remain



### Commander's Corner

By Lt. Col. David Petersen  
47th Operations Group  
commander

Just over 20 years ago, right here at Laughlin, I was awarded my silver pilot wings. It was a very special time; one that I will always remember. Returning to Laughlin and seeing the graduations like the one last week takes me back to the beginning of my U.S. Air Force career and makes me think about the similarities and the differences.

In 1985, Ronald Reagan had just begun his second term as President of the United States. The Department of Defense was seeing the benefits of some of the most significant improvements in equipment and personnel. Laughlin was a bustling place, training about as many pilots as we do today. We used only the T-37 and T-38A trainers, and all students completed the exact same course of training.

Now we split into separate tracks after flying the T-6, still using the T-38, albeit the newer T-38C, and the T-1. Students back then graduated every six

weeks, vice three weeks now, many heading to Europe or the Pacific to support our efforts in the Cold War vice our efforts now in the Global War on Terror.

We had no computers then to speak of. Taskings and other communication came out via hard-copy paper, a telephone call or a face-to-face meeting. There were many more active-duty personnel on base, as we did not have civilian maintenance or the large contract organizations.

The people of Del Rio were as supportive then as they are today; some of them I'm glad to say have been friends for nearly 20 years. The speed limit on Highway 90 was 55 mph. It took much longer to get to San Antonio because it was patrolled every bit as aggressively as it is now. There was also no scheduled airline service out of Del Rio International as an alternative. San Antonio itself was a much smaller town, easily enclosed by Loop 410 for the most part.

The student pilots who arrived for pilot training had the same gleam in their eyes and fire in their hearts to complete the pilot training program. The program took a year, as it does now. Graduates from my class went to A-7s, F-106s, and F-4, which are no longer in the inventory, while one of the oldest planes a student could get then,

the B-52, is still doing a great job for the Air Force today. Some of the graduates stayed as first assignment instructor pilots, just as they do now.

The most significant difference was how the colonels looked much older than they do now, and come to think of it, the lieutenants didn't look near as young as they do now.

Through all of the changes and all of the things that have remained the same, the single greatest constant is the high caliber of all personnel in government service.

The U.S. Air Force and specifically Laughlin have been blessed with hard-working, patriotic citizens who have worked hard and sacrificed to make the U.S. Air Force what it is today. We are about halfway through the 101 critical days of summer, and unfortunately in this short time, we have lost almost 20 Air Force members to accidents.

Our people are too important, as they have always been, to lose. Please use your wingmen, good risk assessment techniques, and be particularly careful operating motor vehicles or participating in water sports. Twenty years from now, who knows who will be writing a column for the Border Eagle?

I hope everyone with us today will be available to choose from.

## Early payment on travel cards can help credit rating



Commentary by  
Maj. Michael Griener  
47th Comptroller  
Squadron commander

True or False – late payments to your Government Travel Card (GTC) impact your personal credit rating. If you answered “False”...unfortunately, that's the wrong answer; but fear not, you're not alone. I continue to see anecdotal evidence that people believe the GTC program

doesn't impact their credit rating because it's a government-mandated program. This just simply isn't the case. Yes, your travel card is a mandatory-use program; but when Bank of America issued your card, it did so in your name. As with any other credit card, some common-sense fiscal stewardship can pay big dividends.

Recently, DoD began tracking how organizations within the department were operating their GTC programs. A metric was established that

tracked GTC delinquencies throughout DoD, and the standard was set – no more than 4.5 percent of all outstanding balances for an organization should be delinquent past 60 days. Within the past six months, that standard has been lowered to no more than 2 percent.

While Laughlin strives to meet and beat this standard, we've been unsuccessful in

See 'Travel cards,' page 3

## Border Eagle

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### Deadlines

News for the Border Eagle should be submitted to the 47th Flying Training Wing Public Affairs Office, Bldg. 338, Laughlin AFB, TX, 298-5262. **Copy deadline is close of business each Thursday the week prior to publication.**

Submissions can be e-mailed to: [olufemi.owolabi@laughlin.af.mil](mailto:olufemi.owolabi@laughlin.af.mil) or [sheila.johnston@laughlin.af.mil](mailto:sheila.johnston@laughlin.af.mil).

### Advertising

Advertising should be submitted to the Del Rio News-Herald, 2205 Bedell, Del Rio, TX, 774-4611. Advertising should be submitted by 4 p.m. each Friday.



Actionline

Col. Tod Wolters  
47th Flying Training  
Wing commander



Call 298-5351 or email  
actionline@laughlin.af.mil

One way to work through problems that haven't been solved through normal channels is the Commander's Actionline.

Before you call in or e-mail an Actionline, please try to work out the problem through the normal chain of command or directly with the base agency involved.

When calling or e-mailing the Actionline, please keep messages brief and remember to include your name and phone number so you are assured of a timely personal reply. Contact information is also useful when additional information is needed to pursue your inquiry.

We will make every attempt to en-

sure confidentiality when appropriate.

If your question relates to the general interest of the people of Laughlin, the question and answer may also be printed in the Border Eagle.

Thanks for your cooperation, and I look forward to reading some quality ideas and suggestions.

Below are some useful telephone numbers that may be helpful when working your issue with a base agency.

AAFES	298-3176
Finance	298-5204
Civil Engineer	298-5252

Civilian Personnel	2985299
Clinic	298-6311
Commissary	298-5815
Dormitory manager	298-5213
EEO	298-5879
FWA hotline	298-4170
Housing	298-5904
Information line	298-5201
Legal	298-5172
MEO	298-5400
Military Personnel	298-5073
Public Affairs	298-5988
Security Forces	298-5900
Services	298-5810

Fitness center pool,  
locker room policy

**Question:** On June 9 around 5 p.m., three adults were lap swimming at the fitness center pool. There were also about eight young children in the pool splashing around. Several parents and strollers were sitting on the opposite side of the pool.

It was my understanding the pool was designated for lap swimming. However, the lap swimmers were asked to leave after one of the children threw up in the pool.

Also, the lifeguard didn't seem to be in the right location to me.

Immediately afterward in the ladies locker room, one of the mothers was yelling at her son to get dressed. He resisted telling her he was too embarrassed to dress in front of the women.

I would think any child old enough to be aware of his own body is too old to be in an opposite-sex locker room.

When was the fitness center pool designated as a kiddy pool? And is there any policy on the age limit of opposite sex children in the locker rooms?

Thanks for your time and concern.

**Response:** The fitness center pool is normally configured to

provide six lap-swimming lanes. However, this does not preclude other simultaneous uses to maximize community benefit from the facility.

For instance, swim lessons are conducted at the fitness center so they can be offered year round and during inclement weather.

There are four locations designated around the pool as lifeguard stands. During swim class, lifeguard are to be near the area where the lessons are being conducted.

Children 6 and older are not allowed in opposite-sex locker rooms and dressing areas.

AFI 34-266, currently in draft, addresses this and will be published soon.

Signs are now posted in the locker rooms with this information.

If you witness the problem again, alert the fitness center staff, and they will take care of the matter promptly.

The pool is open Monday to Friday from 6 a.m. to 8 a.m., from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. and Saturday from 1 to 5 p.m.

Currently, swim lessons are held Tuesday to Friday, 1 to 7 p.m. The pool is closed Sundays, holidays, and on family or down days.

You can call 298-5251 for more information regarding pool availability.

Travel cards, from page 2

attaining this goal for more than 10 months now. But even more imperative than this metric alone the concern that a growing number of members from Team XL are placing their credit history in jeopardy by allowing their GTC accounts to become delinquent.

So what are the consequences for not paying your balance on-time? DoD Financial Management Regulation, Volume 9, Chapter 3 implements and governs the GTC program. For delinquent accounts:

- Automatically suspended if not paid in full within 61 days
- Sent to Bank of America's Collections Department
- \$29.00 late fee assessed starting day 75 (which is not reimbursable)
- Reported on cardholder's credit

report

Day 126, the GTC account is cancelled.

Once a GTC account has been cancelled by Bank of America, it's highly unlikely they'll reinstate the account in the future. In addition to actions taken by Bank of America, there's an entire spectrum of disciplinary actions commanders may implement.

So what can we do as a team to ensure you don't fall prey to a delinquent GTC account?

The following steps will help minimize that likelihood.

- File your travel voucher as soon as possible. If an electronic voucher is filed in defense Travel System, you can now expect to be paid within three to six duty days; if a paper voucher is filed with 47th Comptroller Squadron, you can expect to be paid within five duty days.

When you file your travel voucher, ensure you split disburse your settlement. Split disbursement is mandatory and is a convenient way to ensure Bank of America receives your payment on time. At a minimum, split disburse your lodging, airfare, and rental car expenses (as applicable).

If after split disbursing your travel voucher you still owe a balance on your GTC, you can pay off the remaining balance by mailing your payment to Bank of America, making a telephone payment at 1(800) 472-1424 (Bank of America charges a \$10 fee for this service), or making a payment online at www.myeasy payment.com (no charge for this service).

While there are many steps and people involved with these processes, it really takes a team effort to ensure we stay on glide

slope for continued GTC success. Your unit GTC representatives, your chain of command, your commander's support staff, and 47th CPTS personnel stand ready to provide support and ensure we have continued access to the GTC for mission requirements.

Questions or comments can be directed to 2nd Lt Scott Hollingsworth, Financial Services Officer, at 298-5203, or Senior Airman Andrew Pace, GTC agency program coordinator, at 298-4048.

*"Through trust and teamwork, train expeditionary airpower experts to fight and win America's wars."*  
– 47th Flying  
Training Wing  
mission statement



Photo by Airman 1st Class Olufemi A. Owolabi

**A group of eager spouses gather prior to their orientation flight Wednesday on Laughlin's flightline. Charlene Wolters (far right), spouse of Col. Tod D. Wolters, the 47th Flying Training Wing commander, said, "It was a great opportunity, and we all had a great time."**

## Spouse flights, from page 1

ever), simulators were available for them to still have an experience, if desired."

The lieutenant added that without the help of the 47th Medical Group's Aerospace Physiology and flight-medicine units, this event would not have been so successful.

"The 86th FTS would like to thank Aerospace Physiology and

flight medicine for being so helpful in organizing the spouse flight program," he said.

After some of the flights landed, Denise Arko, spouse of the 47th Flying Training Wing vice commander, said, "We had a great time and (great) pilots... and we enjoyed the flight."

Mrs. Arko added, "It was a lot of fun to see how everything works in the airplanes and how the pilots work together as a team and interact on the radio with the control tower."

## Ejection seats, from page 1

they discovered a "dimple" was missing at the release point of the handle.

"We weren't sure of the cause since we had never come across that kind of problem before," Mr. Deneen explained. "After a proper investigation, we found out the cause of the problem, did a deficiency report, and fixed it."

In the event of an accident, or trouble beyond a pilot's control, he may need to bail out. The MOR handle is what he counts on for a safe ejection from the aircraft.

According to Mr. Deneen, had a pilot been flying with the malfunctioning handle needed to eject, he would have been separated from his seat while flying the aircraft.

"If a pilot were released from his

seat prematurely during a normal flight, that wouldn't be a good thing. It could result in possible loss of life."

"Furthermore," Mr. Deneen said, "because egress survival maintenance is all about saving other people's lives, the workers are always meticulous when doing their job."

"After we discovered the T-6 had an ejection-seat problem, we went out and inspected other aircraft," he explained, "and we found that no other Laughlin aircraft (T-6s) had the handle problem."

He said despite inspecting all Laughlin T-6s, the flying mission wasn't interrupted.

According to Mr. Robert Wood, director of the 47th Maintenance Directorate, "The caring attention to detail and positive attitude of Laughlin maintainers continues to let our aviators fly the safest and best-maintained aircraft in the command."

## One busy airfield...

**In addition to launching student sorties and hosting spouse flights this week, Laughlin's airfield also hosted a B-1B Lancer for graduating specialized undergraduate pilot training class 05-12 and offered jet orientation flights to Air Force Reserve Officers Training Corps cadets.**

Photos by Airman 1st Class Olufemi A. Owolabi



**(Inside the B-1) Col. Garrett Harencak, 7th Bomb Wing commander, Dyess Air Force Base, taxis onto the runway here as he prepares to depart Laughlin July 22. Colonel Harencak was the guest speaker for SUPT class 05-12.**



**Capt. Jason Holcomb, 84th Flying Training Squadron instructor pilot adjusts Cadet 3rd Class Lucas Huebener's seat belt before an orientation flight given to the ROTC cadets here Wednesday. Cadet Huebener is a sophomore from the University of New Hampshire who said his goal is to become a pilot after his graduation.**

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or call  
Tech. Sgt.  
Thomas  
Mayo at  
298-4355.**



# ‘Predictability’ new watchword in deployed travel

By Tech. Sgt. J. LaVoie  
506th Air Expeditionary  
Group Public Affairs

KIRKUK AIR BASE, Iraq -- Most deployed Airmen know how far along they are in their rotation and when they expect to return home. Until recently, that date was mostly speculation, but thanks to aggregation, Airmen will know exactly when they will leave and when their replacement is coming. U.S. Central Command Air Forces officials have implemented this new program providing visibility on when incoming Airmen are supposed to arrive and, therefore when departing Airmen should leave. Because these

dates are set well in advance, there is no more guessing as to when a replacement should arrive or if they are on a certain plane. This program is not completely new. It was used to schedule Airmen arriving in theater during the past few rotations. “They did such a great job of getting people over here during the last (air and space expeditionary force,) they are taking it one step further,” said Col. Scott Mason, 506th Air Expeditionary Group commander here. “This adds predictability for Airmen so they can let families and loved ones back in the United States know when they are getting home.” Once the time-phase-force deployment data sheet is

confirmed and unit deployment managers start giving Airmen the dates they are going home, those dates are unlikely to change. “We don’t want Airmen making life-altering decisions based on the dates, but short of an aircraft breaking, they will move out of here in a two-day window and then leave the hub within two days,” said Tech. Sgt. Lois Harm, 506th Expeditionary Logistics Squadron. “There will be a seat out of here, and out of the hub, with (their) name on it.” This means Airmen should return home within five days from the date they are given by their unit deployment managers. “What’s great about this plan is the wait time (at the hub) will be measured in hours, not days,” Colonel Mason said. CENTAF’s first, full aggregation plan will also prevent hundreds of Airmen from landing at Baltimore/Washington International Airport at the same time, all looking for a commercial seat. The plan will allow Airmen to fly back to their original point in a chartered aircraft. “If you flew all the way from Texas on a military aircraft, we are going to get you all the way back to Texas on a

military aircraft,” said Staff Sgt. Shawn Smallwood. “There will be less confusion, and Airmen won’t have to book their own travel.” Airmen will also know further out when their replacements will arrive. This will allow more time for out-processing and better turnover. “During the last rotation some people didn’t find out their replacement was on a plane until a few hours out,” Sergeant Harm said. “That won’t happen this rotation.” The new plan not only ben-

efits deployed Airmen, but the Air Force as a whole. Because officials know when Airmen are arriving and departing, they can schedule airlift accordingly. “Before, there was wasted airlift because seats were empty and folks could wait at the hub for up to a week,” Sergeant Harm said. “Now they know how many seats Kirkuk needs on a particular day, so they will book that many seats. Airlift is at a premium, so we are utilizing the planes more effectively.”

2X3

2X2

3X3

2X5

# Battlelab technicians develop solutions for warfighters

**By Staff Sgt. Melissa Koskovich**  
366th Fighter Wing public affairs

MOUNTAIN HOME AIR FORCE BASE, Idaho -- With sand whipping across your face and sweat dripping down your forehead, you squint through the scope at the enemy target.

"The third building on the left," you shout into the radio. A garbled transmission is returned. Closing your eyes, you take a deep breath and hope the pilot heard you. The explosion rings through the desert.

Developing smarter technology for warfighters on the front lines is the focus of the Air Warfare Battlelab. The 25-person think tank tackles problems by combining off-the-shelf technology with innovative ideas in hopes of finding a lighter, leaner, and more lethal way of accomplishing the mission.

The battlelab here is one of seven Air Force wide. Since their creation in 1997, they have pushed to move ideas into the field quicker than traditional research and development programs allow.

"Our main focus is to improve how we fight and win wars," said Col. Ernest Parrott, AWB commander. "We aim to help individuals who find themselves at the pointy end of the spear -- keeping them safe and making their jobs easier."

Battlelab technicians from different Air Force specialties tackle problems, both large and small, with the goal of developing ideas or solutions within 18 months. Their diverse career backgrounds afford a creative environment giving them the ability to envision projects such as the stabilized portable optical target receiver.

"(The receiver), developed in an attempt to ensure

weapons were truly hitting their mark, combines existing technology into a pair of binocular-like goggles. They allow ground forces to see laser signatures and ensure the correct targets are being painted by aircrews," Colonel Parrott said. "After calling in air support to a target location, troops on scene can look through (the target receiver) and ensure the correct target is being engaged."

Inventions like this are invaluable in preventing friendly fire incidents and ensuring the highest degree of accuracy in military strike operations, he said.

Other battlelab technology is also earning some limelight.

"Vein Viewer is another idea recently developed by our (team)," said John Marshall, battlelab team member. "This invention combines night-vision goggle technology with needs of medical patients in the field. It allows medics to literally see the vascular system thru the skin."

This technology proves useful in both civilian and military applications, solving problems ranging from starting intravenous lines more easily to assisting medics during bumpy medical evacuation operations. Vein Viewer is currently being tested at Wilford Hall Medical Center at Lackland Air Force Base.

With such a rapid turnaround, suggestions and new information on technology are always welcomed.

People interested in submitting ideas or technology for consideration can go online to [www.mountainhome.af.mil/AWB](http://www.mountainhome.af.mil/AWB).

"The problems brought to us are like puzzles," Colonel Parrott said. "We have most of it put together, but sometimes we're missing a piece. That piece is out there somewhere."

As the ring of the explosion fades, you rise to your



(From left) Staff Sgts. Erik Roberts and Eric Jones conduct a field test for the stabilized portable optical target receiver as Neil Huber and John Harwick, battlelab technicians, look on. Battlelab technology often requires field testing before implementation. The Airmen are assigned to the

feet and wipe the gritty sweat from your brow. In front of you lay the ruins of the building, exactly as planned. The pilot heard you. You saw it; the la-

ser signature dancing across the target. You breathe a sigh of relief, pack up your equipment and move on to the next location. Your mind is at ease.

**422nd Training and Evaluation Squadron at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev.**

Thanks to battlelab technology, you are on the cutting edge.

## QDR will reflect tomorrow's not today's challenges

**By Donna Miles**  
*American Forces Press Service*

WASHINGTON--Military leaders will resist any temptation to assume the force needed for the future will be a cookie-cutter version of today's needs, Gen. Richard B. Myers said here Monday.

The chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff was talking about how the military will examine its forces, resources and programs during the upcoming 2005 Quadrennial Defense Review.

The QDR, he told the group, needs to consider the broad range of missions the U.S. military could be called to support. These run the gamut from full-scale combat operations to nontraditional missions ranging from counterinsurgency missions to stability operations as well

as homeland defense.

"We want to make sure, when we get our forces set here in the early part of the 21st century, that they can deal with a wide variety of threats," General Myers said. "We cannot focus on just one area." Similarly, he said, planners cannot assume future operations will be run like today's.

"The way Afghanistan was fought was different than the way Iraq was fought, and Iraq will be different than whatever we will be called on to do next, whether it's humanitarian assistance or peacekeeping or whatever it might be," General Myers said. "We have to be careful that we don't fall victim to templates of what we are currently doing now."

How to create the best-structured, -trained and -equipped force for these various missions will be the QDR's "essence," the general said.

Defense and military lead-

ers already recognize that there is too much conventional force structure in some areas, the general said. The Army is working to rebalance the skills within its active and reserve components, and to transform some "heavy" units into lighter, more agile units.

The report, which examines emerging threats and balances them against current capabilities, is instrumental in shaping budgets, strategy and force structure.

The most recent Quadrennial Defense Review, conducted in 2001, occurred just before the United States entered the war on terrorism later that year. Much of that review's emphasis was on transforming the military from its Cold War posture to a lighter, more capable and deployable force better suited to 21st-century threats.

(Courtesy of  
Air Force Print News)

5X11



# Deployed docs win hearts, minds with surgery

By Master Sgt.  
Orville Desjarlais Jr.  
Air Force Print News

CUENCA, Ecuador -- A seven-person plastic-surgery team from Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, is currently providing free corrective surgeries to Ecuadorian civilians here.

Operating on mostly cleft lips and palates, the team is staging from the El Hospital Militar de Cuenca, an Ecuadorian military hospital located near the center of the city.

"They are just wonderful people here," said Col. (Dr.) Gary Harishita, chief of plastic surgery at Wilford Hall Medical Center at Lackland. "Being given the chance to help them is very gratifying to us."

A majority of the patients are children from underprivileged families. One patient, 14-year old Adrian Puata, gave his father a hug and walked down the hallway without a peep for his cleft lip operation.

"Kids here are very stoic," Dr. Harishita said. "They are less dramatic than children in the United States. Kids here are forced to grow up quicker because of the conditions in which they live. Their attitudes are very different."

Because the team has to use anesthesia on their patients, they were able

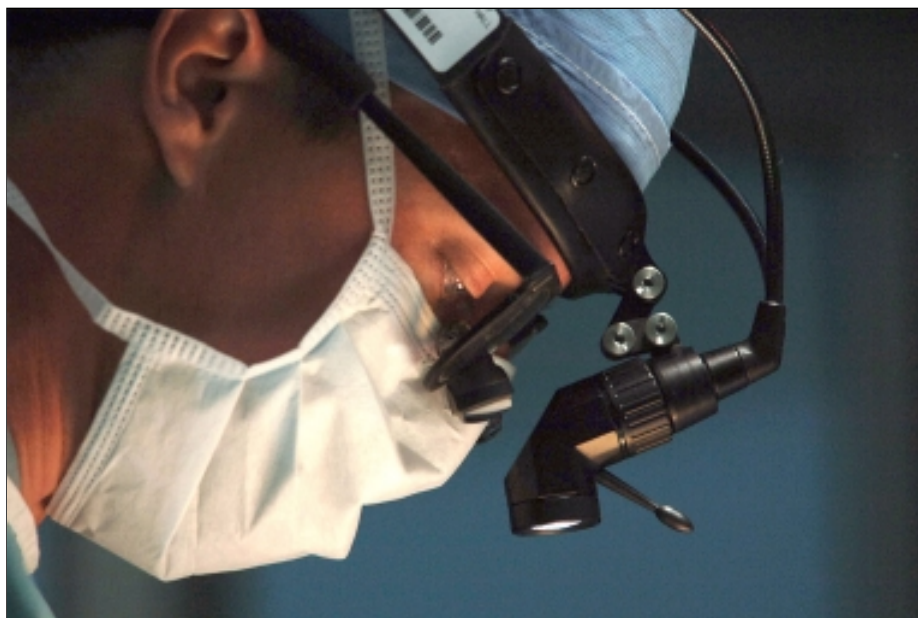


Photo by Master Sgt. Efrain Gonzalez

**Maj. (Dr.) Ted Ferguson performs reconstructive surgery on 14-year-old Adrian Puata to repair his cleft lip during a 12-day medical readiness training exercise here. Dr. Ferguson is part of a seven-person plastic surgery team from Wilford Hall Medical Center at Lackland Air Force Base.**

to treat only about 30 before departing Thursday.

Before the medical readiness exercise began, they screened about 45 Ecuadorians. The team selected 30. But even after the selection was made final, people still came to the team seeking help.

"It breaks my heart when so many

people want help, and we have to turn them away," said Maj. Patricia Bradshaw, a nurse who controls the flow of patients in and out of the operating room. She also serves as the primary interpreter and is in charge of post-operation recovery. "Every time we have to turn them away, a mother gets heartbroken."

Adrian, who looks more like 10 than 14, was one of the lucky ones selected. His cleft lip draws the right side of his nose downward. During a one-and-a-half hour operation, Maj. (Dr.) Ted Ferguson, a plastic surgeon, peered through magnifying glasses for precision.

"In a lip repair, a millimeter off is noticeable," Dr. Harishita said. "There is an artistry involved in this type of operation which gets better with experience."

During this medical exercise, the two doctors repaired more cleft palates and lips in 12 days than in a year at Wilford Hall.

After an hour and a half, Adrian's operation is over with no complications. Dr. Harishita said he will not only look better, which is important to a teenager, but he will also talk better.

"I create an emotional attachment to all the little children," Dr. Ferguson said. "It's more rewarding because I can affect their lives early on while they're still in school and have an already difficult time relating to their peers."

Later that same afternoon, doctors released Adrian so he could go home.

Last year, six medical readiness exercises provided free medical services to about 40,000 people throughout Ecuador.

## Airman develops antidote to injection confusion

By Crystal Toenjes  
72nd Air Force Base  
Public Affairs

TINKER AIR FORCE BASE, Okla. -- Knowing how to administer an antidote to a fellow Airman who falls victim to chemical exposure in the field will not be as difficult as before.

A new sticker on the antidote kit designed here, with specific instructions on when and how to administer the antidote for nerve agent poisoning, is helping to alleviate some of the stress of making the decision during exercises.

"While the kit already existed, what wasn't readily

available were the instructions on when to use what," said Capt. Kevin Ingram, who designed the sticker after his own unsettling experience during an exercise in May.

"Somebody came in to our tent when we had all our gear on, and he couldn't breathe," Captain Ingram said. "He had some kind of sore on his face, and he was exhibiting all these symptoms. He was basically dying on us."

Captain Ingram, of the 72nd Air Base Wing legal office, and another Airman tried to determine how best to respond to the symptoms being exhibited by the man who was down.

"It gets ... difficult sometimes because, obviously, most of us aren't medics and the self-aid buddy care isn't something we do every day," Captain Ingram said. "We have different types of chemical and biological agents that people can be affected by, and you have different types of treatments."

Quickly being able to determine if the person is suffering from exposure to a nerve agent is important because it calls for one to three injections of atropine using an auto injector into the thigh and described by Captain Ingram as "very painful."

"You don't want to be hit-

ting people with these auto injectors unless you know for sure, and we didn't know for sure," he said.

Part of the reason they were uncertain was because they, like many Airmen, did not have the symptoms for nerve agent poisoning memorized or immediately available to them in some format.

"We had our atropine injectors, and we had gloves on, the mask on, all our gear on trying to thumb through our Airman's manual to find what the symptoms are, and the guy is dying," he said. "It wasn't a comfortable situation for us."

Not wanting to feel that way again in an exercise, Cap-

tain Ingram developed a nerve agent sticker to put on the injectors so when the package is needed, the symptoms and instructions on how to administer the injections are readily available.

Captain Ingram presented the idea to the deployment commander, and it was implemented across the camp.

He hopes the sticker will be considered for real-world implementation so it not only has the potential for saving the lives of players in exercises, but also Airmen in real-world situations.

*(Courtesy of Air Force Materiel Command News Service)*

## Dorm project first in AETC to use 'geo' technology

Saving taxpayer dollars, enhancing quality of life for future UOQ residents

By Master Sgt. Anthony Hill  
Public affairs

Construction is set to begin here Monday on a new dormitory that will feature the latest technology using geothermal energy.

The new dorm will consist of 56 rooms for unaccompanied officers attending pilot training here. It will be the first Air Education and Training Command building to use geothermal technology for its heating, ventilation and air conditioning system, said Ben Graf, 47th Civil Engineer Squadron project manager.

"It costs more up front, but it gives you so much energy savings in the long run that it pays for itself," said Mr. Graf.

The project manager explained that the geothermal system takes advantage of the Earth's underground temperature to provide heating in the winter and cooling during the summer.

"If you go down deep enough (under the Earth's surface), the temperature stays the same whether it's in the winter or summer," he said. "You wouldn't have to use nearly the amount of energy that's used for a (building's) normal HVAC system."

The Earth absorbs the sun's energy



Artist rendering courtesy 47th Civil Engineer Squadron

**A two-phase project is planned to construct two dormitories at Laughlin Drive and Fourth Street for unaccompanied student pilot officers. Once complete, an additional 120 rooms will be available for residents, including more space and amenities than the current dormitories provide for the students.**

and stores it underground. When it's cold outside, a geothermal heat pump, with water used as the heat exchange medium, is used to extract heat from the ground and pump it indoors. During hot weather, the system works in reverse. Heat is pumped out of the building and transferred to the ground.

This use of the steady temperature of the Earth's crust will help reduce the building's energy operating costs, said Mr. Graf.

A groundbreaking ceremony was conducted Wednesday to commemorate the start of the construction project, which is the first of two phases slated to improve the quality of life for student pilots living in the dorms.

"There are going to be a number of upgrades and new amenities in the

new dorms," said Jesse Valdez, dorm manager for the unaccompanied officers' quarters. "It will be a big plus for future students attending undergraduate pilot training here."

Each new dorm room will have more space, 330 square feet, compared to the 256-square-foot rooms in the current student dorms in buildings 449 and 450. Each room, with a living and sleeping area, will also have a bathroom and kitchen, ceiling fans, walk-in closets and better lighting than the existing dorms.

Maria Berny, housing flight chief, said the new dorms will make more rooms available for the students, help Laughlin improve the quality of life for the residents and bring the dorms up to more modern standards.

The dorm-construction project will cost \$7.3 million and is expected to be completed in September 2006.

Phase two is currently awaiting Congressional approval and will consist of constructing an additional 64 rooms.

As this project gets underway next week, it will join other major base construction currently in progress, including the wing headquarters building, aircraft weather shelter and education center.

The existing dorms, built about 25 years ago, currently house 200 residents. Separate construction has been planned to renovate the existing dorms by modernizing their utilities and giving a facelift to interior and exterior portions of the buildings.

### Miss an edition?



Log on to

***www.laughlin.af.mil***

*from home and click on the  
"Border Eagle"*

*icon on the left column to access archived  
copies of the Border Eagle.*

### Safety essential near firing range

The 47th Security Forces Squadron reminds everyone that the small-arms firing range is off limits to unauthorized personnel and should be considered dangerous at all times.

The range is located on the south end of Fourth Street, approximately 200 meters from the perimeter fence. It is routinely used to conduct live-fire

weapons training.

Trespassing in the range area is not only illegal, but can be extremely hazardous during firing.

A red streamer placed at both approach roads to the firing range provides a safety warning of the range's presence and as a reminder to approach with caution.

When the range is in operation a red beacon and a large red flag will

be displayed. If anyone notices the flag or beacon, call the range at 298-4469 before approaching.

Anyone needing access to the firing-range area during duty hours must call the 47th SFS combat arms section at 298-5151 or the range at 298-4469.

During non-duty hours call the law enforcement-desk at 298-5100.



XLER



Photo by Airman 1st Class Olufemi A. Owolabi

Senior Airman Daniel Mattson  
47th Communications Squadron

**Hometown:** Custer, S.D.  
**Family:** Mother, Pam, dad Milan, two brothers, Shaun and Cole  
**Time at Laughlin:** 2 years, 4 months  
**Time in service:** 2 years, 11 months  
**Greatest accomplishment:** Deploying to Iraq and returning home  
**Hobbies:** Shooting pool, playing guitar, golfing and wrenching on my truck  
**Favorite movie:** “The Big Lebowski”  
**If you could spend one hour with any person, who would it be and why?** My little

brothers because our fishing trip is long overdue.  
**Bad habit:** cussing  
  
“Airman Mattson performed the job of two Airmen while his supervisor was TDY, volunteering to work after duty hours to patch servers and to escort field technicians during equipment repairs.”  
  
- Tech. Sgt. Glenn Houtchens, 47th Mission Support Squadron (Former supervisor)



Laughlin Family Support Center is open Monday through Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Call 298-5620 or for more information on programs and events, see page 16.

Laughlin Salutes

- SUPT Class 05-12 awards**
- Daedalian award:**  
2nd Lt. Cody Goetz
- Academic award, airlift/tanker track:**  
Capt. Andrew Meudt
- Academic award, fighter/bomber track:**  
2nd Lt. James Kappes
- Flying training award, fighter/bomber track:**  
2nd Lt. Cody Goetz
- Flying training award, airlift/tanker track:**  
Capt. Andrew Meudt
- Citizenship award:**  
2nd Lt. William Andreotta
- AETC Commander’s Trophy, fighter/bomber track:**  
2nd Lt. Cody Goetz

- AETC Commander’s Trophy, airlift/tanker track:**  
1st Lt. Timothy Rawson
- Fighter/bomber Distinguished Graduate:**  
2nd Lt. Cody Goetz
- Airlift/tanker Distinguished Graduate:**  
1st Lt. Timothy Rawson
- Outstanding Officer of Class 05-12:**  
1st Lt. Timothy Rawson
- Outstanding 2nd Lieutenant Award:**  
2nd Lt. Kenneth King

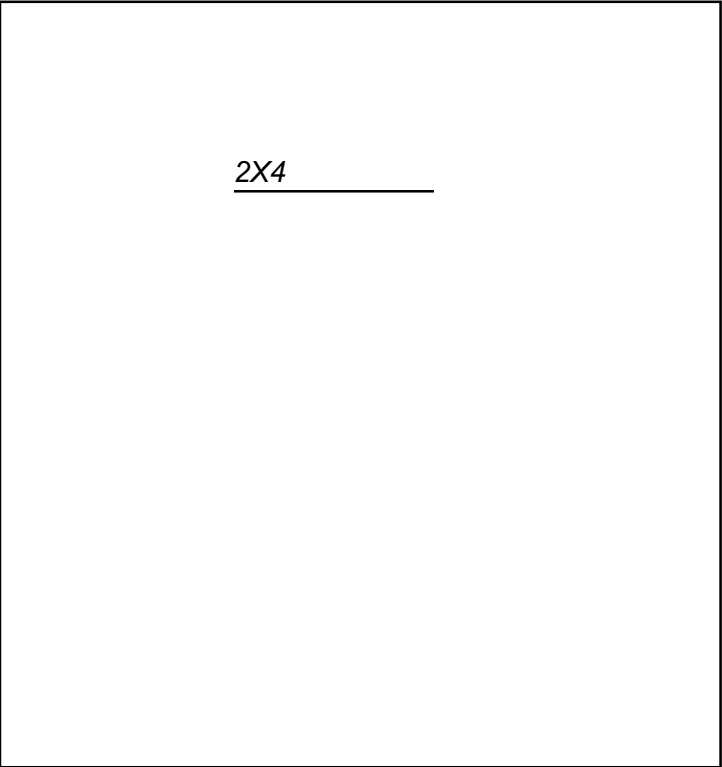
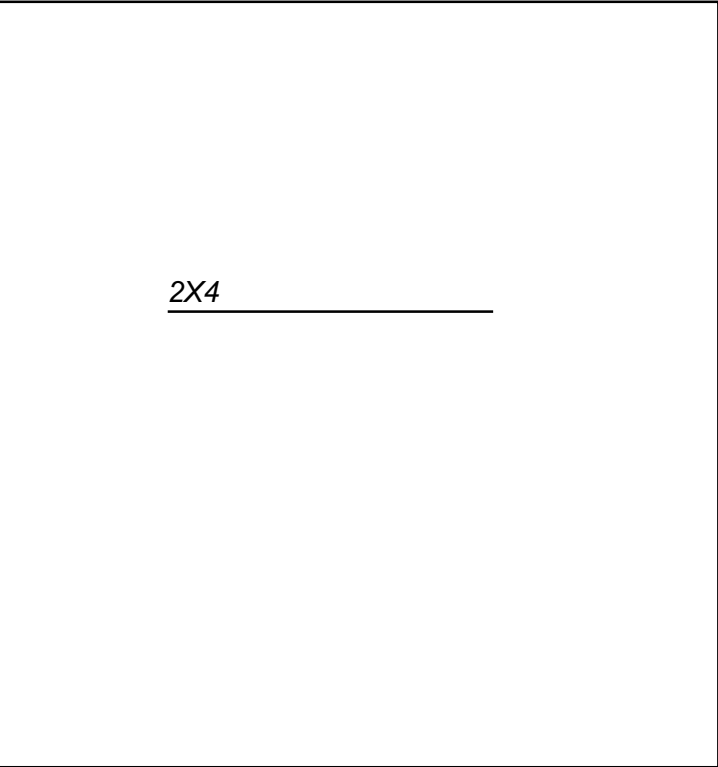
- August enlisted promotions**
- To Master Sergeant:**  
n Alfred Jones, 47th Mission Support Group  
n David Lewis, 47th Security Forces Squadron

- Technical Sergeant:**  
n Kathleen Crowell, 47th Aeromedical-Dental Squadron  
n Paul Tully, 47th Flying Training Wing
- To Staff Sergeant:**  
n Jonathon Schmidt, 47th Operations Support Squadron
- To Senior Airman Below the Zone:**  
n Elizabeth Lopez, 47th ADS  
n Karl Schnoes, 47th Civil Engineer Squadron
- To Senior Airman:**  
n Sadek Brandford, 47th ADS  
n Renato De Jesus, 47th Services Division  
n Jason King, 84th Flying Training Squadron  
n Michael Stephens, 47th OSS  
n Isaac Zabayle-Paredes, 47th Communications Squadron
- To Airman 1st Class:**  
n Daniel Elliston, 47th SFS  
n Meagan Peacock, 47th ADS  
n James Whitaker, 47th OSS

- July re-enlistees:**
- Tech. Sgts.**  
n James Leavitt, 47th MSG  
n David Lewis, 47th SFS  
n Anita Sampson, 47th ADS
- Senior Airmen:**  
n Gregory Birdsong, 47th OSS  
n Kavita Singh, 47th MSG
- 2nd Quarter Awards**
- Warrior Fit (Large unit):**  
86th FTS
- Warrior Fit (Small unit):**  
47th Contracting Squadron
- Dorm Room:**  
Airman 1st Class William Krcelic, 47th Medical Group
- Dorm Suite:**  
Airman 1st Class Catherine Balalong, 47th OSS
- Airman:**  
Airman 1st Class Daniel Podnar, 47th CS
- NCO:**  
Staff Sgt. Kathleen Williams,

- 47th OSS
- Senior NCO:**  
Master Sgt. Cassandra Ableiter, 47th OSS
- Company Grade Officer:**  
1st Lt. Karen Negran, 47th ADS
- Civilian, Category I:**  
Ralph Ochoa, 47th Maintenance Division
- Civilian, Category II:**  
Andrew Posey, 47th Mission Support Squadron
- Civilian, Category III:**  
Kathleen White, 47th FTW
- Health and Safety Contributor:**  
Capt. Jerimy Maclellan, 87th FTS
- Volunteer:**  
Tech. Sgt. Ronald Hunter, 47th CONS
- Honor Guard member:**  
Staff Sgt. Jennifer Nalls, 47th CONS
- Instructor Pilot:**  
1st Lt. Andrew Patrick, 86th FTS





### Did you know?

Nearly one-fourth of children between the ages of 5 and 9 killed in traffic crashes in 2002 were pedestrians. (Source: NHTSA Traffic Safety Facts 2002.)

The ultimate responsibility lies with drivers. Drivers should slow down in residential and school areas and always remember that children are hard to see, impulsive, and tend not to think before they act.

# ‘Here’s your sign!’

Compiled from staff reports

Did you know that according to the Texas Driver’s handbook, pedestrians have the right-of-way when using crosswalks?

Probably. But, do you know where Laughlin’s busiest pedestrian areas lie?

Although signs may not be posted in all pedestrian areas, motorists are encouraged to watch for children and adults alike in highly-trafficked areas and crosswalks around base including:

--the crosswalk near Heritage Park at Lib-

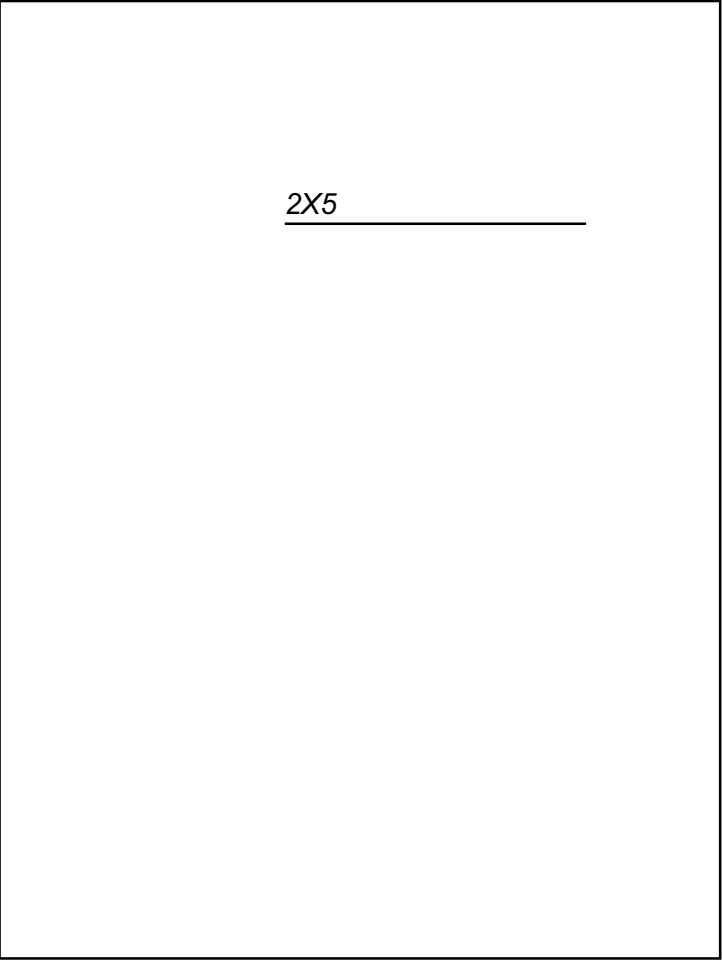
erty Drive and Freedom Way, --the crosswalks around the gym on Mitchell Blvd. and Laughlin Drive, and

--the four-way stop at Freedom Way and 2nd Street to name a few.

According to security forces personnel, all Laughlin members can take down license-

plate information about motorists observed violating traffic laws and turn it into the law-enforcement desk by calling 298-5100.

For other Texas traffic laws and updates, log onto <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/drive/>.



It only takes a second...

# Airmen’s counterdrug operations help homefront

By Master Sgt.  
Orville F. Desjarlais Jr.  
*Air Force Print News*

MANTA AIR BASE, Ecuador -- America has 1.4 billion reasons to have a base in this Andean country. That is the amount of drugs - in dollars - that did not find their way onto American streets, in part because of counterdrug operations from here.

“The war against drugs is important for everyone, not just the United States of America,” said Col. Pat Richardson, the U.S. Military Working Group commander based out of Quito, Ecuador, about a 30-minute flight north of here.

“It is a menace to the region, and our positive relationship has shown the good that can come from such a positive relationship,” the colonel said.

When Howard Air Base, Panama, closed in 1999, the Department of State lost a large portion of its ability to perform counterdrug operations. After the United States and Ecuador completed negotiations in 1998, the Air Force built Manta Air Base in 1999. It is located in the center of an Ecuadorian air force base known as Eloy Alfaro.

On a typical day, a



Photo by Master Sgt. Efrain Gonzalez

**An E-3 Sentry airborne warning and control systems aircraft refuels off the western coast of Ecuador before patrolling the sky over South America.**

customs plane lumbers off into the humid air in the early morning, along with a Navy P-3 Orion. It is followed by a Coast Guard C-130 Hercules, an E-3 Sentry airborne warning and control systems aircraft, and a KC-135 Stratotanker.

“We interdict to make it more difficult for drugs to be available in the streets,” said Maj. Chris Armour, an AWACS mission crew commander from Tinker Air Force Base, Okla. “We look for air tracks, which are aircraft that carry drugs, and water tracks, which are like fast-moving cigar boats.”

After spotting what they think may be a drug smuggler, an AWACS crew will contact the U.S. Coast Guard

or customs who will fly in to confirm their suspicions.

“People don’t realize the extent of our mission. We have aircraft and ships taking part in this war on drugs. It’s very extensive,” Major Armour said.

Airman 1st Class Alvin Marlar, an airborne radar technician who repairs the AWACS’ bulbous radar, said he normally flies once a month in Oklahoma. During this 60-day deployment here, the Mississippi native flies at least once every two days.

“It’s good training, and it’s for a good cause,” Airman Marlar said. “I am actually going to dread the day I have to leave.”

There are 13 Airmen stationed here permanently

for a year. The rest rotate during air and space expeditionary force deployments.

About 230 people are stationed at this base on the western coast of South America. Contractors provide support such as food services, the fire department and aircraft maintenance.

The contracted fire department earns a bulk of the attention because they have raised thousands of dollars for local causes. They have also battled major city fires alongside their counterparts downtown. They have 17 Ecuadorian firefighters.

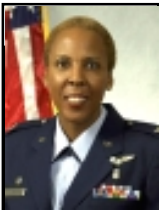
“(The contractors) do a majority of the support mission,” said Lt. Col. Bill Brinley, commander here. “They are as much a part of this team as any person who sits in an aircraft. I’d pit this fire department against any in the world.”

1x3

1x3

3x3

2x5



What's  
up Doc?

By Col. Laura Torres-Reyes  
47th Medical Group  
commander

**Question:** I am brand new to the Air Force and don't understand many of the rules and regulations surrounding my medical benefits. My wife was sent off base for dental work recently and was told she needed mandatory work done, not cosmetic.

I was under the impression that all dental work for spouses is covered and went along with the recommendation to get the work done. The dental work totaled more than \$2,900! I later found out that there is an annual cap of \$1200 and I am now responsible for over \$1,700 worth of dental work.

If we had known there was an

annual cap, we would have elected to get some of the work done now and some of it later.

I'd like to know if there is a way to defer the payment or have it paid altogether by Tricare.

**Answer:** I am sorry that your experience with the Tricare dental program has become so frustrating and costly.

Unfortunately, you have entered your spouse into a contractual agreement with United Concordia, and will need to resolve all billing and payment issues directly with them.

The good news is that they may be able to work out a payment plan that doesn't place an undue strain on your finances. Their contact number is 1-888-622-2256.

I do understand your frustration with a dental-insurance program that seems so complicated.

To help in the future, I can only offer words of advice to always assert your responsibility as an informed consumer. The contracts that you select for your spouse and

family members have a variety of options that require your close scrutiny in understanding the benefits of the plan you select.

Always read the fine print of the contract and ask questions before agreeing to any fees or services.

Never assume. If you have questions, you should contact the United Concordia contractor directly.

For question about your family medical benefits, the Tricare Service Center is located at the clinic. Their walk-in hours are Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. They have brochures on the many different healthcare benefit plans and services available. They also have copies of the United Concordia enrollment form if you decide to disenroll or change your current contract. I hope this has helped.

Thanks for your question!

You may contact Colonel Torres-Reyes at [laura.torres-reyes@laughlin.af.mil](mailto:laura.torres-reyes@laughlin.af.mil) if you have a What's Up Doc? question.

Intramural Softball  
Standings



	Team	Win	Loss
Western Division	CES 1	13	2
	SFS	9	5
	CCS 1	8	6
	MDG	7	5
	CCS 2	3	11
	MSS	0	2
Eastern Division	CES 2	14	2
	LCSAM	13	3
	86th	9	8
	87th	7	7
	84th/85th	6	7
	OSS	4	11
	LSI	3	12





Photo by Senior Airman Tim Beckham

**Bump,  
sunset,  
spike ...**

BALAD AIR  
BASE, Iraq --  
Tech. Sgt.  
Edward Brown  
(right) spikes the  
ball over an op-  
posing player  
during a volley-  
ball game as the  
sun sets here  
Tuesday. He is  
assigned to the  
332nd Air Expedi-  
tionary Wing's  
manpower office.

**XL  
Fitness Center  
Hours  
298-5251**

**Monday - Thursday:**  
5 a.m. to 11 p.m.

**Friday:**  
5 a.m. to 8 p.m.

**Saturday- Sunday:**  
7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

The fitness center also  
offers aerobic classes  
such as **Spinning,  
Step, Yoga, Aqua,  
Cardio Weights  
and Pilates.**  
A spinning class is of-  
fered today beginning at  
5:15 p.m.